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Message Text

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46
ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 EUR-12 IO-10 ISO-00 PRS-01 H-02 SS-15

NSC-05 PA-02 USIA-15 /079 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/P:MHVANORDER:RGH
APPROVED BY NEA/P:GFSHERMAN
S/PRS - MR. FUNSETH (INFO)
H - MR. FLATEN (INFO)
EUR/P - MR. JERABEK
IO/P - MR. BLACHLY
NEA/ARN - MR. BULLEN
NEA/ARP - MR. AHERNE
AF/P - MRS. RUSSELL
---------- 050599
P 291629Z OCT 75
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN PRIORITY PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY JIDDA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY
USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY
CINCEUR PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USMISSION NATO
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
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AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

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AMCONSUL DHAHRAN
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING

GENEVA FOR MEPC DEL
CONCEUR FOR POLAD

FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS FROM DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S PRESS BRIEFING FOR OCTOBER 28, 1975:

Q. WHAT CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT THE SITUATION IN LEBANON AND THE AMERICANS THERE?

A. THE SITUATION THERE CONTINUES TO BE, AS WE HAVE ALL BEEN READING, VERY UNCERTAIN; AND AMERICAN DEPENDENTS AND NONESSENTIAL PERSONNEL ARE MOVING OUT.

I DON'T HAVE ANY EXACT FIGURES AS OF NOW, EXACTLY HOW MANY AMERICANS ARE THERE--I MEAN THE QUESTION OF--PEOPLE MOVING OUT. I AM TOLD THAT THE AIR FIELD IS OPEN AND THAT COMMERCIAL AIR LINE ACTIVITY APPEARS ADEQUATE TO HANDLE OUTGOING TRAVELERS. WE JUST RECEIVED THIS FROM OUR EMBASSY.

BEFORE THE RECENT FIGHTING BEGAN, TO JUST TRY AND GET INTO

SOME FIGURES AS MUCH AS I CAN FOR YOU, THERE WERE ABOUT 475 OFFICIAL AMERICANS AND DEPENDENTS.

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AND THEN I BELIEVE WE REPORTED TO YOU ALSO, BEFORE THE RECENT FIGHTING BEGAN ROUGHLY -- THE ESTIMATE WAS -- THERE WERE 5,000-ODD AMERICANS IN THE COUNTRY.

NOW OBVIOUSLY, THIS IS NOT, WAS NOT AN EXACT FIGURE. IT CANNOT BE. FROM MY OWN EXPERIENCE ABROAD, LOTS OF AMERICANS COME AND GO. THEY ARE THERE TEMPORARILY. LOTS OF AMERICANS CHOOSE NOT TO REGISTER. SO IT IS DIFFICULT

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FOR ANY EMBASSY, ANYWHERE, TO GET AN EXACT FIGURE. BUT THE ESTIMATE THAT OUR EMBASSY GAVE WAS 5,000 ODD.

NOW AS FAR AS THE 475 OFFICIAL AMERICANS' DEPENDENTS ARE CONCERNED, THIS FIGURE WAS REDUCED BY ABOUT 50 PRIOR TO THE INTENSIFICATION OF HOSTILITIES DURING THE PAST WEEK. DURING THE PAST SEVERAL DAYS, FURTHER DEPARTURES HAVE REDUCED THIS FIGURE EVEN FURTHER--BUT I CANNOT GIVE YOU AN EXACT FIGURE ON IT.

WITH REGARD TO DEPENDENTS OF THE PRIVATE AMERICAN COMMU-NITY THERE--THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY PRIMARILY--DEPENDENTS ARE MOVING OUT. AS YOU ALL KNOW, THE EMBASSY SUGGESTED A FEW DAYS AGO, AND I THINK WE REPEATED HERE, THAT WE WOULD SUGGEST--WE TOLD THEM WHAT WE WERE GOING TO DO WITH REGARD TO DEPENDENTS AND NONESSENTIAL PERSONNEL AND WE SUGGESTED THAT THE PRIVATE AMERICAN INSTITUTIONS, BUSINESS OR OTHERWISE, MIGHT WANT TO THINK ABOUT DOING THE SAME THING. THEY ARE DOING THIS; THEY ARE REDUCING.

I CHECKED WITH THE TASK FORCE UPSTAIRS, AND THEY HAVE NOT GOT FROM AMBASSADOR GODLEY -- AT THIS PARTICULAR TIME CANNOT GIVE US -- AN EXACT FIGURE, BUT IT IS MOVING DOWNWARDS.

SO THAT IS SORT OF A ROUND UP.

Q. IS THERE ANY QUESTION OF SUPPLYING -- ANY CONTINGENCY PLANS FOR AIRLIFTING PEOPLE THAT MIGHT WANT TO GO OUT IF THIS PRESSURE CONTINUES?

A. THERE MAY BE CONTINGENCY PLANS. I THINK, AS WAS SAID A WEEK AGO -- AT EVERY EMBASSY IN THE WORLD WE HAVE AN UNCLASSIFIED

EVACUATION PLAN, AND WE TRY TO TAKE CARE OF ALL SORTS OF CONTINGENCIES. BUT JUST LET ME SAY THAT AS OF NOW THERE

IS NO NECESSITY TO CONSIDER THAT PARTICULAR OPTION. NOW THAT BEING SAID, IT MAY HAVE TO BECOME AN OPTION LATER ON. BUT AS I HAVE JUST SAID EARLIER, THE COMMERCIAL AIRLINE ACTIVITY APPEARS TO BE ADEQUATE.

Q. IS THE UNITED STATES ENGAGED IN ANY DIPLOMATIC ACTION CONCERNING THE LEBANESE SITUATION AT THE PRESENT TIME?

A. DO YOU MEAN WITH REGARD TO TRYING TO CALM THE SITUA-TION DOWN IN BEIRUT?

Q. YES.

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A. I AM UNAWARE OF ANY SPECIFIC INITIATIVE THAT THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT IS UNDERTAKING IN THIS--SHALL WE SAY--COMPLETELY INTERNAL DIFFICULTY THAT IS FACING THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT.

Q. HAVE YOU GOT ANYTHING FURTHER OR ANY CHANGE OF HEART ON THE PART OF MAYOR BEAME REGARDING THE RECEPTION FOR PRESIDENT SADAT?

A. I THINK, IF I AM NOT MISTAKEN, MR. NESSEN ADDRESSED THIS AT THE WHITE HOUSE. IF YOU DON'T HAVE IT, I WILL BE GLAD TO --

Q. I DON'T WANT WHAT HE SAID. I WAS WONDERING WHAT YOU HAD, IF ANYTHING, ADDITIONAL.

A. I DON'T THINK THERE IS MUCH ADDITIONAL THAT NEEDS TO BE SAID ON THAT ONE.

Q. DID HE ADDRESS THE REPORT THIS MORNING THAT THE STATE DEPARTMENT PUT THE PRESSURE ON MAYOR BEAME?

A. DID NESSEN?

Q. YES.
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A. I DON'T THINK HE DID, BUT I WILL BE GLAD TO.

Q. WOULD YOU, PLEASE? THANK YOU.

A. YES. NO, WE DID NOT PUT ANY PRESSURE ON THE MAYOR. AND, FRANKLY, WE JUST TOOK IT FOR GRANTED THAT MR. BEAME, AS THE MAYOR OF NEW YORK CITY, WOULD WELCOME THIS DISTINGUISHED CHIEF OF STATE WHO IS HERE ON A VISIT, AN OFFICIAL VISIT, AS A GUEST OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT.

Q. HAS ANYBODY FROM THE DEPARTMENT BEEN IN TOUCH WITH MAYOR BEAME OVER THE PAST COUPLE OF DAYS?

A. THAT I DO NOT KNOW, BUT YOU ASKED ME ABOUT PRESSURE AND THERE WAS NO PRESSURE.

Q. WELL, IF YOU DON'T KNOW IF ANYBODY HAS BEEN IN TOUCH WITH HIM OR NOT, HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT THERE HAS BEEN NO PRESSURE?

A. IN THE VERY BEGINNING, WE REQUESTED -- AND THIS IS

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DONE WHENEVER A DISTINGUISHED FOREIGN VISITOR COMES--WE REQUEST THE MAYOR'S OFFICE, OR SUGGEST TO THE MAYOR'S OFFICE, THAT IT MIGHT BE APPROPRIATE TO RECEIVE THIS DISTINGUISHED VISITOR. THIS IS DONE ON EVERY SUCH OCCASION. AND THAT, AS FAR AS I KNOW, IS THE EXTENT TO WHICH WE HAVE DISCUSSED THIS QUESTION UP IN NEW YORK--WITH THE MAYOR'S OFFICE IN NEW YORK. ALL I AM SAYING IS THERE WAS NO PRESSURE ON THE PART OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT AS IT WAS INDICATED IN THE PRESS TODAY.

Q. THERE ARE REPORTS OUT OF JERUSALEM THAT ISRAELI OFFICIALS REGARD THE STATEMENT MADE BY PRESIDENT SADAT AT THE NATIONAL PRESS CLUB YESTERDAY REGARDING ZIONISM AND THE FACT THAT HE SAID THE EGYPTIAN ECONOMY WAS IN THE HAND OF THE JEWS UNTIL 1952 AS AN ANTI-JEWISH SLUR. AND I UNDERSTAND THE CONFERENCE OF PRESIDENTS OF MAJOR AMERICAN JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS SIMILARLY CONDEMNED THE SADAT STATEMENT. DOES THE STATE DEPARTMENT HAVE ANY COMMENT ON THAT?
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A. I DO NOT HAVE ANY COMMENT ON THAT, NO.

Q. BOB, HAVE YOU HAD ANY INDICATION FROM ANY OTHER MAYOR, SAY IN CHICAGO, HOUSTON OR JACKSONVILLE MIGHT FOLLOW MAYOR BEAME'S LEAD?

A. NO, SIR, I HAVE NO SUCH INDICATION.

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